

CRISIS STUDY

SUEZ

[Study: Miscalculations. (Why do every miscalculations take us so often by surprise?)

Surpr

(Was UK action "preventive" — w.r.t. possible future action by Nasser — or "punitive" — to regain face, restore prestige + influence, eliminate presently intolerable government?)

[On Surprise: Critical issue: Have big bets been placed, or not? (as opposed to mere private predictions)

(Public predictions, warnings, commitments, preparations or lack of preparations)

12 Oct 55

See: 30-3-55 Prob. Consequences of the Egyptian Arms
Deal with the Low Bloc

5 Sept 56

30-4-56 Prob. Repression of British-Turk
Military Action ⁱⁿ the Suez Crisis

30-56 28 Feb 56

see note given to RN (Newstedt?)

b) US did have reason to think; nationalization had been planned earlier, was not hasty, emotional response to rejection, which was not a surprise to Nassar (he predicted, though he had not been warned).

Was it (planned as) retaliation?

Or was it really an alternative to US financing: in which case it might have come after US temporizing;

Or was it desired anyway, and even lesser "expenses" would have sufficed?

Thus, no crisis in US

or in Egypt!

Only in England, France, where last-dancer attitude prevailed.

Prestige regarded as dominant issue by England, France: China vs. Nassar's.

If Nassar "got away with it," France might as well quit in Algeria (& Benignia & Sultan of Morocco would go); England would become another Holland.

(Self-image shattered).

Why did Kasser figure he could get away with it?
Failure of ~~the~~ ESNIE.

See SNIE

Why did Dulles think crisis had subsidized in September? The moves he had suggested as necessary prior to — and hopefully, instead of — action had now been tried and had failed. True, public support for and care for action had diminished — but was there any indication that British-French gov attitudes had changed? (Or had Dulles decided earlier, that if he could cool them off for 2 months, they wouldn't move?) (Dulles had indicated that force was allowable as last resort — Kasser must disgorge — and that moment had arrived).

In the end, Eisenhower's prestige was finally involved:

by: 1) defiance

2) timing

3) prior secrecy & deception

4) attempt to coerce him by fait accompli, timing (French vote)

5) Eisenhower's continued deception? (Nov 6)

Pineau: political problem (i.e. power, influence, prestige)
not legal (or economic).

[Our view in Cuba.]

(legal)

SYMBOLS: References to Rhineland, Munich, Hitler, Mussolini, apparent.

US regarded nationalization as irrevocable commitment;
English-French attitude was, the most reverse.

Would not Mac have taken this attitude in Cuba?

As in Cuba, what was feared was effect (not of every
action but) of passive acceptance of act on ^{expectations +} attitudes,
and future acts, of
2) Others (pipelines, bases; acceptance of UK-French
leadership; political position of friends; Algerian revolt,

b) the enemy

[Thompson: Why did we go to Vienna after K interview with
Thompson, May 25[?] — when Berlin demands were expounded?
To convince K he was wrong?

Komer:

US attitude: we did not address problem of blow to
prestige, need to punish or defeat Nasser;

we said 1) Nasser in legal rights

2) N. hasn't yet indicated he would
exploit situation illegally

3) No basis for military measures, legal/moral now

4) Public attitudes won't support: espec. for

reasons given: nationalisation ~~SD~~, private interests, oil, colonial policy
prestige

5) Wait for a clear provocation:
attack on nationals, blockade of shipping

(Nasser hadn't deceived: but did carry out as
fait accompli, without prior consultation (how unusual,
with nationalisation?))

Our CUBA reaction showed that SUEZ reaction was
not "antecedent" — JFK Admin saw issues in same terms
as Eden-Pineau. (What would have been JFK attitude to
Suez, in 1962 instead of 1956? / Bay of Pigs not parallel.)

(Finer's account of) Dulles ~~to~~ emotions after Hussein
interviews like K emotions after May 16 pre-Summit;
has excited, elated, having permeated a thriver;
"he can't do that to me."

(Prison in Korea?)

Note: of postwar crises, not one was initiated by
aggression by a major opponent (actions of
ally in Aug, US in U-2, US in Bay of Pigs, ^{SU in Hungary} ~~Turkey~~ — could be
called aggression), or by ^{illegal} threats; or by illegal
actions of opponent

● (exceptions: North Korean — though not law — aggression;
Berlin Blockade? — though SU did not oppose us by
force (we didn't threat by force).

Vienna threats, 1961 → Preparation for Berlin threats, 1962.